

THE
TERRA INCOGNITA

OF

LINCOLNSHIRE;

WITH

**OBSERVATIONS, MORAL, DESCRIPTIVE,
AND HISTORICAL,**

IN ORIGINAL LETTERS,

**WRITTEN (PURPOSELY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF YOUTH)
DURING THE MONTHS OF MAY AND OCTOBER, 1815.**

BY MISS HATFIELD,

Author of Letters on the Importance of the Female Sex, with Observations on their Manners and Education; and of the Theology and Mythology of the Ancient Pagans, dedicated to the purpose of female instruction.

*"Such studies improve youth, they delight us at home,
are our enjoyment abroad, travel with us, and are our
companions in the country."*

CICERO.

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PREFACE.

RURAL quiet,—the contemplation of nature—the study of books—and the converse of friendship, have at all times been the choice of wisdom. Minds that have reached a pitch of unison with these instruments of earthly harmony, have found that RETIREMENT is the nurse of virtue, from whom they have derived their purest feelings and enjoyments. To this generous benefactor and physician FASHION flies to restore her exhausted

brain, DISSIPATION to renovate a ruined constitution, and the *victim of wordly disappointment, perplexities and cares, to seek in its blest shades a suspension from persecution and wrong.*

Rough and untutored by the hand of gentleness must be those minds that are without a taste for rural scenes !

Do they dread the lengthening of the span of that *inestimable* blessing TIME, let such be assured that the regulations and enjoyments peculiar to the country are capable of sinking hours into moments. In order to plant and cultivate an inclination for RETIREMENT, I have been induced to offer in the form of letters the contents of several fragments and notes, which have been presented to me by a friend, in which the DESCRIPTIVE,

MORAL, and HISTORICAL, are appropriately and effectively blended—and with no more of the imagination than is necessary for embellishment. Under such an appearance, and with a little indulgence on the part of the reader, I have judged them not an unacceptable recreation in the routine of studies for youth. And to be in sympathy with those who having already entered the busy scenes of the great world, have been sensible of the delights of those alternate enjoyments, found only and tasted in RURAL quiet—and in the shades of summer suns. I offer them with HOPE, arising from the liberal approbation with which my former literary labors have been honored; and it will afford happiness to myself, if I shall have the good fortune to supplant even a *single* one of those innumerable books, under which the shelves of *select* libraries for young

people are oppressed, that by the excitement of a more wholesome mental taste, the poison with which they are impregnated may be counteracted.

London,
June 15th, 1816.

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LETTERS,

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LETTER I.

May, 1815.

DEAR FREDERICK,

IT is now a week since a barouche and four conveyed Lady W. Lady N. and myself from Cavendish-square to this place. Phœbus never shone more kindly than on the 10th; we took him in his morning beams, and during some hours made our course rapidly. Never have I seen vegetation so forward in so early a period of the season, it seemed impatient to

burst forth to delight the searching eye of an early observer. The hedges had unfolded a leaf of the most refreshing green, and the black-thorn was already on the spray, gaily glowed the parterre with varied flowers, and the blossoms on the walls and in the orchards gave hopes of a plentiful maturity ; added to this, the condition of the roads was the most grateful to travellers. In fact, all without was gratifying, and if I slightly sketch the interior adjustment, it will offer to your consideration a party entirely disposed, and that with infinite capability to render mutually agreeable a journey of nearly two hundred miles. The only anxiety I experienced, was that of having within a few short hours, bid an adieu of many months to friends to whom my society was necessary, no less than theirs to my happiness. As Lady W.'s health had

been some time in a delicate state, we closed our first day's journey at Biggleswade, a distance of forty-seven miles from town, where we found comfortable refreshment and repose. As you have frequently travelled the north road, you will join in my opinion, that the cultivation and aspect of the country from this town, suffers a considerable change, and is little distinguished for scenery either in plantations, parks, woodland or mansions. Its prevailing character is a plain and marshy ground, studded with its genuine offspring the willow, mostly pollard. As a great admirer of beauty in landscape, I regretted the absence of that pleasing variety we had enjoyed so much. On our second day's journey we turned off a little beyond Stilton, and passed the Yaxley barracks, which with satisfaction I saw, were no longer the prison

of the unfortunate French captives, and terminated our fatigue at Falkingham. Here we seemed to touch upon a different region in regard to both country and season.—The weather, from the clear and genial temperature of a fine May, changed to a sudden and most awful tempest; during a conversation at the tea-table we were not aware that the continued and heavy rolling over our heads, proceeded from thunder, till a sudden crash, which seemed to shake the building to its centre, convinced us of a tempest, we hastened to the window, on drawing aside the curtain, and opening the shutter, the whole horizon appeared in one expanse of livid and active flame.—Situated on the summit of the hill, our view of the lightning was commanding. A sudden inundation of rain disburthened the element,

and a gloomy calm succeeded to the most effulgent lightning I ever witnessed. On the following morning we pursued our course to Lincoln. As you have travelled this way, you will recollect that the lower road to that city, so far from offering any pleasing object to draw the attention, is a sombre pilgrimage, and that before entering the dreary heath, which has been in part lately enclosed, and from that cause received a more cheering aspect, there is a very old house called the Green Man, where horses are regularly baited. As lovers of antiquity, we unanimously concluded to alight and take a slight view of it *en passant*, and found the building not unworthy our attention; it contains a very ancient justice, or council-room, which is fitted up for the purpose of extraordinary occasions. In

driving over the bleak heath, it seemed to us a living picture or a moving plain of a busy republic of rabbits. Soon that bold and towering object, the Minster, relieved the vacant scene, and claimed our whole attention, not only from its grand elevation, but also for its distinguished lightness, and beauty of architecture. On reaching this venerable city, we slackened our pace, and proceeding slowly up the hill, had an opportunity of observing the various specimens of antiquity that still exist in it. The very stables and barns, once edifices consecrated to religious use, are distinguished by gothic doors and windows, and Newport-gate is considered the noblest relic in this kingdom of Roman architecture. We alighted and took up our residence the remainder of the day at the principal inn, having now

a distance of only thirty-six miles, before we attained our ultimate destination.

Lady W. was disposed to rest; not so Lady N. a very different feeling was operating in her mind, knowing herself to be within the reach of embracing her family before she slept, from whom a melancholy event had occasioned her to be long separated, she explained herself to her mother, took a slight refreshment, and with her woman drove off in the travelling post carriage, which had followed the barouche from town. Lady W. and myself obeyed the call of the Minister-bell by attending the service.— I greatly admired the interior of the building, but found the performance of the choir much below mediocrity. Here, Frederick, I would pause, and hint to you that the quick circulation

of spirits, which to a person in health, attends the movement and variety of travelling, having in some degree subsided, my mind began to concentrate itself in a single idea, that the next day would bring me to the goal, to the very extremity of Lincolnshire, whose local character I had never heard renowned for any natural beauty. The storm of the preceding night, had given a gloomy cast to the weather, and a succession of rain continued to fall; the prospect was altogether dreary, and from combined causes, I felt that my own mind wore a corresponding gloom. However, the die was cast, and six months of my existence thrown upon it. No time was left for reflection, for Lady W. anxious to rejoin her amiable daughter, and look upon her grand-children, was prepared the next morning for an early departure. We resumed our

seats in the carriage, and pursued the road to Brigg, a distance of sixteen miles from Lincoln. It was at this town we took our last set of horses, and heing obliged to make a retrograde movement of nearly a mile, we entered upon a desolate moor, whose unpeopled state, depth, and caverns of sand, obliged me to compare it to the trackless wild of Arabia Deserta. This desert has an extent of seven miles, and on being informed that our summer abode was not within twelve miles of Brigg, and over this cheerless heath, and that it was our nearest post town, I felt myself as if going into a state of little better than exile. But, however beautiful the outward prospect might have been, the incessant rain would have prevented us from having any enjoyment of it, as the glasses streaming and thickened with the rain, were obliged to be con-

stantly up. Any change from such a state was preferable. At length after a funereal progress, we rejoiced on discovering a different movement of the carriage, and hearing by the sound of the horses' feet, that we had exchanged a heavy sand, for a clayey soil soaked with rain. This with enclosed hedges, augured our near approach to a village, and we were enabled to perceive, that vegetation was here much less forward than that of the south, when we left it only three days previously. "I think," said Lady W. clearing off the steam from the window, "I discover a man on horse-back riding up to the carriage." Her ladyship put down the glass, and recognized Lady N.'s steward, who had been sent to escort Lady W. to the end of her journey. In an hour we found ourselves at a double iron-gate, thrown open for the admission of the

carriage, and driving up the avenue of a lawn, discovered Lady N. accompanied by her five lovely daughters, and attended by her domestics, ready at the door to receive and welcome her *excellent parent*. After conducting us to the drawing-room, and mutual enquiries were exchanged, her ladyship attentively walked with us to our respective apartments. The one allotted for me had a lively view ; my baggage was already placed, looking like an old acquaintance ; but I had no time for the busy thought of friends, the hour of meeting at dinner was near, and some adjustment of dress was necessary. Having brought you to the end of my journey, I must suppose we are mutually weary of it, therefore adieu.

LETTER II.

May 30.

DEAR FREDERICK,

My last would lead you to suppose that the carriage wheels were still whirling in my head ; it is now debarrassed of my journey, and better able to give you a clearer sketch or outline of the family whom I had the honour of accompanying to this place. Do not imagine that the double iron-gate, and the avenue of the lawn, admitted us to a stately mansion, whose

entrance was elevated by a flight of steps, and that those steps were surmounted by a portico resting on massive pillars. No, the entrance-hall to the abode of Lady N. is level with the flat stone of the threshold, but the hand of taste has converted it into a conservatory of the choicest plants; it leads to a dining-room on the right hand, moderately sized, and modestly furnished, and to a study on the left, supplied with books most adapted and for the use of the young ladies. The drawing-room, by no means extravagantly fitted up, is of large dimensions, and enjoys a double prospect, but the ceilings of the whole suite of apartments are low. The building contains several bed-rooms, remarkable for plainness and neatness—it is the Rectory. By the male branch the N. family may boast of brilliant ancestors. I have traced it

as far back as the year 1590, which affords a very tragical record. It runs thus—" Sir James N. second son of the Earl of Moregrave, was drowned with two of his brothers, servants, and other persons of their suit, in the river Ouse at Whistgist-ferry, the boat having been upset by an unruly horse ; the third son was killed in France in a duel ; and the fourth dislocated his neck in a riding-house on their own domain." It was a very extraordinary destiny that so many male branches in a direct line should have been cut off in the flower of their age by differently violent causes. Eminent merit, and distinguished services rendered to the country a century and a half ago, obtained the brilliant reward from royal favour of a ducal coronet, and a marquissate to the eldest son. It is not my intention to trouble either you or myself

with genealogical accounts of collateral branches or changes in the family, but bring only those before you who have acted their part well in the present generation in quality of Baron, in which we shall find a sympathy of destiny still ruling. George, Lord N. in February, 1815, died without children, his title and estate immediately devolving to his only brother Henry, the husband of the present lady, his own health being at that time very delicate, and becoming seriously affected by grief for the sudden death of his brother, Henry, recently in possession of family dignity, in the same month descended into the sepulchre of his fathers. From this heavy calamity his amiable widow, still young, was left the sole natural protector of six children, consisting of a son, the eldest, and five daughters. She was a second wife,

and a son having been the offspring of the former marriage, has become sole heir to the title and estate. On observing dates you will find that from the very recent occurrence of these melancholy events, we make but a very sombre appearance, and in so secluded a situation, cannot be in possession of many resources to counteract the gloom ; yet barren must be that soil on which I *cannot cultivate some sprig*. The foregoing circumstances were the cause which kindly induced Lady W. to submit to the fatigue of so long a journey, that her presence and conversation might contribute to the relief of her daughter's sorrow, and solace her mind in this retirement ; and in her early state of widowhood I rejoice to tell you that success has already appeared to reward her maternal affection.

As usual, yours, &c.

LETTER III.

June.

“ Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight
 Than what more humble mountains offer here.”

WINDSOR FOREST.

DEAR FREDERICK,

THE dreary pilgrimage I made through the Arabia Deserta of Lincolnshire, has conducted me finally to a land of *promise*, and served finely to contrast with, and set off, to greater advantage, this chosen spot. A *terra incognita*, which I must ex-

plore in silent devotion, for I am certain it is one of the favourite haunts, if not the very seat of the muses. Ever since my arrival, I have slept on the brow of Parnassus. How shall I supplicate the presiding deities? They accept no sacrifice, but require solemn invocations on a well-tuned lyre. Alas! I fear mine will be too humble a lay to merit a single inspiration. Having drawn you a sketch of the Rectory-house, I shall proceed to inform you, that it is seated in a particularly handsome lawn, ornamented with shrubs and fruit-trees of espaliers, and standards in full bearing. The gardens are extensive and well cultivated. I have ranged them in company and in solitude; but it is in the latter state, that I prefer to "woo lone quiet in her silent walk," and watch "when vernal airs through trembling osiers

play." It is for this purpose, that I have selected a beautiful plantation walk in which, sometimes, forgetting that I am a *mere mortal being*, I fancy myself one of the daughters of Apollo. I will attempt to convey an idea of it, such as I now behold it, in the middle of June, when nature has given to her robe its highest embellishment; it is her gala dress, in which she is arrayed, and sports and wantons here as in her prime of creation. Each change she assumes, is a varied grace. To an eye of taste, to a mind sensible of the powers of beauty, "she appears adorned with all that earth can give to make her lovely. In this retired walk I feel the sweet influence of her presence; she has thrown her enchantments around *me*. At my feet, I not only *see* a richly wrought carpet of her own embroidery, but I also seem to tread on .

enamelled down. Lofty and odorous shrubs, uniting over my head, form the most fragrant canopy, which gently winding, breaks into arches. Again, a gradual bending discovers to me a lengthened arcade, whose perspective terminates in a successive point. This, elegant nature, like an accomplished female, displays to my observation, the produce of her labour, performed in silent retirement, during the long and tedious hours of winter, now exhibited to my admiration under the bright patronage of Apollo. A light drapery depending from the arches, composed of the white and purple lilac, intermingled with the golden lybernum, and the lovely acacia carelessly drooping in festoons, encircles me, while tendrils of the purple clymatis hang wildly pendent ; the odoriferous exhalations, wafted by the gentle gales, enliven my senses,

and the delicate and varying tints of the youthful green upon the branches of the trees, afford me a refreshing shelter from the increasing heat of the sun, and by combining, render my retreat almost impervious to his ardent rays, which faintly and obliquely enter. The rose and the sweet-briar, the showy daffodil, contrasted with the lowly violet, the humble, though beautiful periwinkle, extending its delicate tendrils on the ground, and the narcissus, assist to enamel the parterre.

“ Here let me pass the sultry hours away.”

In the thickest part of the foliage, I have discovered a verdant gothic passage, in which a few rustic steps lead me up to a little mount, conveniently furnished with a jardinière to rest upon, and a telescope to assist the

view. The back-ground is formed of lofty trees, which separate it from the plantation, and serve to break off the sudden winds that often affect us in summer. This mount is on the surface of one of the highest hills, from which it is enclosed by a luxuriant semicircular hedge, a flowery carpet in mosaic, refreshes the footstep, and an assemblage of various flowers decks the borders. I am seated as in a stage-box at the theatre, not to witness a mimic scene, but to behold such a panorama of nature, as the pen cannot describe, nor the imagination easily conceive !

“Heavens what a prospect lies before me !
 Here hills and vales, the woodland, and the plain ;
 Here earth and water seem to mix again ;
 Not chaos like, together crushed and bruised,
 But, as the world, harmoniously confused.”

WINDSOR FOREST.

While with rapture I contemplate from this elevation, the magnificence of nature now before me, and which she presents to all who are willing to approach her, I am astonished that those who are denominated people of fortune and taste, should fly to inspect the beauties of foreign climes, before they have made themselves acquainted with those of their own, many of which are so worthy of their admiration, that they will bear out in any competition with others. It appears to be a truism, that whatever is remote from our actual position, seems the most desirable, the most worthy of our regard. Englishmen, in particular, cannot remain long stationary; and it is very supposable that, during the late very long blockade of the continent, they were driven, as by necessity, to a greater investigation of their own soil, than at any former

period, to explore the Isle of Wight, the mountains of Wales, the wonders of Derbyshire, the lakes of Cumberland, and other attractive resorts. Persons acquainted with the respective characters of the counties, that compose this *most beautiful island*, will, with difficulty, be brought to confer upon that of Lincoln the term of beauty. The encomium I am irresistibly disposed to bestow upon it, does not apply to the county at large; but is confined to a very limited portion of it; a part distinguished, as it were, from the grand map—the most remote—having no thoroughfare, it is the least known, the most beautiful, and the most deserving of being known. I am conscious, Frederick, that my descriptive powers are too feeble for the task; for in my rambles, I have found the contemplation of this terra incognita too vast for

even a mental excursion ; at least, in my attempt to delineate, and it is too interesting to be neglected, my thoughts appear entirely scattered, The difficulties I meet with, are unexplored. No other traveller having viewed it, with either my feelings or with similar observations, or beaten down a single track for me to follow. Indeed, the inhabitants themselves, accustomed to view it from their earliest infancy, regard it with indifference, or “ with brute unconscious gaze.” Notwithstanding their apathy, I have commenced my labour, and my solitary walks are never unfurnished with a pencil and fragments of paper. In this situation I am frequently met by the villagers ; they offer me their decent respects, but I discover, at the same time, astonishment in their looks.

Yours, &c.

LETTER IV.

“ Far from the maddened crowd’s ignoble strife,
 Their sober wishes never learned to stray,
 Along the modest scene of humble life,
 They keep the noiseless tenor of their way !

* * * * *

“ Nor venerable age is wanting here.”

DEAR FREDERICK,

FROM what I have already advanced in favor of the situation of this obscure village, you will be impatient to have some idea given of it, or be induced to form one in the airy regions of your own conceit. As there is no record of this place to be found, like the tradition of primitive times,

I am indebted for my information, to a venerable old patriarch, whom I have pressed into my service. He informs me, that one hundred and eight years ago, his father settled in Burton, in the business of a taylor; he succeeded him in the employment, and added to it the respectable office of parish clerk, which he has held sixty years. This good old man has a son, the third in succession in the business, from which he has retired. Although considerably passed his eightieth year, he walks with the agility of one in the prime of his days, and enters into my views with energy and pleasure.—If I open my account with a moral observation, you will, I hope, admit, that such a sentiment is not inapt, for have not the greatest empires in the world, had their vicissitudes and revolutions? Is there a part of creation securely

sheltered from physical or moral accidents? In either case, are not eminent stations the most exposed to those attacks that bring on their fall? At the time when the present rich and populous town of Hull had not yet emerged from the low estate of a poor fishing-place, Burton Stather was the metropolis of the busy Trent. Its high elevation, for some part of it with a church, was built on the brow of these commanding hills, and founded on their different declivities on the east side of the river, unsheltered from the violence of every weather to which it was liable. In this precarious position, the church and other buildings, by an extraordinary tempest on the mountain side, became suddenly a prey to the destructive power of the elements.—Struck from their foundations, they fell upon the hills, rolling in scattered fragments,

parts of which are even now frequently discovered. To avoid a similar fate, the present town, which escaped from destruction, has not extended its limits, but philosophically resigning itself to a state, reduced from former greater consequence, rests in a modest and humble retirement, invisible on that side on which the other part standing so boldly prominent fell to rise no more. The Burtonians have obtained a new charter for a market, which was formerly held on Tuesdays, and for their fairs. It bears the date of the 14th of May, 1708 ; but from the rising superiority of Hull and Gainsborough, they have not been able to recover their former trade. Yet my venerable reporter informed me their misfortunes did not end in the partial destruction I have mentioned, nor by the agency of one of the elements alone, for on the.

16th of November, 1770, the banks of the Trent gave in a little below Gainsborough, and in a few days, the inundation spread over all the low grounds about Burton. That a similar destruction might be in future guarded against, the shores on each side of the river are secured by numerous jetties. On the 22d of February, 1777, which he remembers to have been on a Saturday, about nine o'clock, for he is very exact in his dates, the brig *Phoenix*, bound from London to Gainsborough, laden chiefly with groceries and liquors, and lying off Burton, having twenty barrels of gunpowder on board, took fire and blew up. The explosion was dreadful to the village and neighbourhood of this devoted place, and was heard with terror at the distance of many miles. Several houses were unroofed, and otherwise greatly damaged, and

the loss sustained was calculated at three thousand pounds. You see, Frederick, the elements did not combine, but attempted to annihilate them by distinct visitations. As I saunter every morning, immediately after breakfast, I bent my steps to the church-yard, and taking my station against the wall, was enjoying with astonishment the view from the south-west side, when my old friend stepped lightly over to me, and directing my attention to a plot of ground under our eye on the other side of the wall, now subdivided into potatoe beds for the use of the inhabitants of two poor families, occupiers of a couple of crazy thatched cottages, verging to the earth at the upper end of it, he hung with a pensive look over these objects, and with a becoming feeling said, "I grieve to enter into so many particulars of our fallen state; but your wanting to,

know more than any other person has ever given himself the trouble even to think about, makes me try to recollect as much as I can. You will be surprised when I inform you that seventy years ago, what now appears to you two miserable cottages, were our manor-house, at the end of which was a capital boarding school, which afforded the best education to young gentlemen in this county : that building is quite destroyed, and in 1764, I saw the last master buried in our church at the age of 89. The ground now used for the growth of potatoes, was once our busy market-place. All is now gone to decay !" He groaned, and raised his hand. " And pray, Mr. clerk," I answered, " is not that the fate of all human things?—Did you never hear of Babylon, of Nineveh, of Palmyra, of Rome ?" The poor old man looked at me in amazement ; re-

collecting himself, he answered, “ did not their inhabitants mourn over their ruins ?” The question was unanswerable—we were mutually and from the same feeling silent. He turned towards the sacred edifice before us ; I saw his meaning, but told him my visit there must be deferred to another morning.—“ I will bring the key with me to-morrow at this time,” said he,—touched his hat, and with something of sober thought, I returned to the rectory.—Adieu.

LETTER V.

Glendower. Come, here's the map, shall we divide our right?

* * * * *

Mortimer. And, dear Coz, to you
The remnant northward, lying off from Trent,

* * * * *

Hotspur. Methinks my moiety north from Burton here,
In quantity equals not one of yours ;
See, how this river comes me cranking in,
And cuts me from the best of all my land,
A huge half moon,—a monstrous cantle out.
I'll have the current in this place damn'd up ;
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run
In a new channel, fair and evenly ;
It shall not wind with such a deep indent,
To rob me of so rich a bottom here.

Glendower. Not wind ? it shall, it must,

* * * * *

I will not have it altered. *First Part of Hen. IV. Act 3 Sc. 1*

DEAR FREDERICK,

As I never approve of dwelling upon misfortunes that are past, I will commit those of ancient Burton, with the rest of that colossal family and send them in company together

down the floods of oblivion, confining my view to the existing one, as it now stands, in the humble degree of a village, which is in a very compact state, and comprizes about fifty houses, twelve or fourteen of which are built of brick, and having the more modern improvement of sashed windows, make a very creditable appearance ;—two or three out of the above number are more particularly distinguished from the rest. There is one principal street, tolerably wide, paved on one side, well bottomed and gravelled in the middle road, so that even in winter it is not uncomfortably dirty. It reflects great credit on the management of the very respectable magistrates of this district, that they have adopted the most certain means of guarding and preserving the good morals of the inhabitants, by preventing any increase of public houses. Burton possesses

only one, which is shared in common by two neighbouring villages, and from its respectability may be rather denominated an inn : it bears the sign of the Black Bull, and is kept by an host of good character, who is also an engraver and blacksmith. There is a resident apothecary, who is considered to be successful in his practice. Burton can boast of one good shop of useful articles, properly adapted to village customers, being well stocked with groceries and haberdasheries. It may be considered a magazine, to which supplies can be had by the regular conveyance of the steam packets, which are at this moment established, and now daily pass the shore, proceeding from Hull to Gainsborough, an intercourse which, notwithstanding its desirable convenience, it is not improbable will in a short time produce that demoralization in the yet

simple and honest manners of the Burtonians, which never fails to accompany an admission of the greater luxuries of life to those who have hitherto known only its wants in the most simple state. The inferior class have an air of decency and order about themselves and their cottages, not frequently to be met with in their rank. I find it a rural amusement, when walking down the village on Saturday evenings, I discover their public enjoyment of the sweet relief from the toils of weekly labour, “when old and young go out to play ;” and it is still more gratifying to witness on Sundays, their neat attire and cheerful faces, their devotion in the church, and their rustic assemblies in the street at the close of the day. The Burtonian cottagers enjoy a happiness superior to many others, less fortunate than themselves in the hu-

mane patronage of the lord of the village, a humanity for which the family of N. has been long distinguished. What can give them a greater distinction than their forbearance during the high rents many years exacted of their poor tenants by numerous rich and noble proprietors of land? Not only have these been kept at a low rent, but the use of a cow has been allowed to each poor peasant, with land sufficient for its sustenance, and there is an excellent provision made, that should any disorder or accident deprive them of the generous animal, its value is advanced by a contributory club instituted for that purpose. Thinking my morning walk was fixed, I directed my steps to the church-yard, and was soon attended by my antient guide. We approached the edge of the precipice on which he seemed desirous of making his stand; "take care you

don't slip," said he, looking down; "you see this stupendous hill has been cut asunder by the great labour and perseverance of man. How rough and ragged the separated sides hang! Yes, the labour was undertaken to make this broad road that leads to the stather at the water side; it is a wharf or staith converted into the word stather, which gives the distinction to our town; where all goods and passengers land or embark. You see below there a pretty white and very respectable house behind those trees, close by the water for public accommodation, built on the platform. At the beginning the road is very steep, and a hard drag it is for the poor horses; it afterwards descends more gradually and proceeds about a mile."

"My good friend," said I, looking up to examine the weather, "the air is at present uncommonly clear, and as

this climate is subject to sudden changes and sea-fogs, it would be rather unlucky to lose so fine a day for my views. Will you allow me to defer my visit to the church till a future morning?" He approved my plan, and I returned home. On knowing my wish to make a short excursion, Lady W. politely offered to drive out in a remarkably beautiful direction. The village of Flixborough, a distance of two miles, was the chosen spot. It is the south and first point of the range of hills deserving attention. Although of high elevation this range is regular in its ascent, appearing like an immense russet terrace, covered with scarlet and purple heath, which finely intermingle and produce a lovely effect. It has a retiring position, which throws a prominent character upon its bold and obtrusive neighbours the hills, and is formed out of the wild scenery

of the forest land. After considering it some time in silence, I exclaimed to Lady W. "My dear Madam, behold

"Here in full night the russet plains extend,
There rapt in clouds, the blueish hills ascend ;
Even the wild heath displays her purple dyes,
And midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
That crowned with tufted trees and springing corn
Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn."

WINDSOR FOREST.

Having finished my appropriate quotation, Lady W. observed, "since, Miss Fielder, you are so romantically disposed in respect to this terra incognita, I cannot do better than stop at the parsonage, and invite Mr. Rison to accompany us in our drive." The reverend gentleman was soon seated in the carriage, and addressing himself to me, after the morning compliments were over, "well, Miss Fielder, as you seem to be so sensible of the

sublime and beautiful in scenery, I shall be happy to assist your observations as far as my power will admit of." I thanked him, and said, " Oh ! Sir, in what a beautiful world do you live ! " " It is," said he, " the world of God's making, full of wonder, of instruction, and open to all that are disposed to acquire an acquaintance with his wisdom and power, in the natural creation. Ladies, nature's testimony is sure ; she may be equally perused in legible and ineffacable characters by the student in his solitary walk, by the husbandman at his labours, and by the saint in his closet. These are the studies that bring no repentance, because they conduct us further to the truth, wisdom, and goodness of God." Pleased and benefited by Mr. Rison's pious observations, I said, " You, Sir, have a living text before you, and I hope to hold

in remembrance this short lecture whenever I contemplate this wondrous scene of things. We, on the contrary, breathe in an artificial world of man's making, the theme of his study, the object of his ambition; a world consisting of forms, diversions, pursuits, and prospects of human society and greatness." "As you appear to know the features of your own gay and great world so well, Madam, I hope you will avoid its assailments." "I will, Sir, endeavour to guard against them." "I shall now, ladies, proceed to inform you that a few years ago, the Board of Agriculture sent Mr. Pierre, to take a view of this most extraordinary country. He pursued his object as far as the village of Birringham, a short distance from hence. Unfortunately Mr. P. had not been able hitherto to find any other than swampy and marshy ground.

Suspecting from what he had already seen, that all the land north of Birmingham was of the same nature, an ungenial boggy soil, he reported his opinion to the Board, and all further investigation ceased. The learned traveller was not happy in his commission, having desisted from his observation near where the line of beauty begins, in a direction north of Birmingham, continuing the whole length of the range of these hills, which extend seven miles on the east border of the Trent, in varied scenes of increasing grandeur and majesty as far as the Humber. To afford you a view uncommonly fine, I would recommend that we alight from the carriage on what we call Flixborough Old Common." We soon reached the spot, and took our stand there: turning to the south, my companion said, " behold one of the

finest landscapes in nature. Pass your eye slowly over it, and consider the horizon of that extensive plain, bounded by the grand acclivity of yonder distant hills, their surface thrown out to view by the effect of light plantations, coloured heaths, and romantic villages. These vast hills sweep a champaign country of no less vast extent, fertile in grain and pasturage, and divided by the Trent. It is here you see *his* despotic power in a course so broad and rapid, that making irresistible way into the land on each side of the plain, innumerable and large peninsulas are formed by it, the heads of which point to their opposite bays; but, however beautiful these bold irregularities of the river appear to a tasteful eye, they occasion a difficult navigation, as the varied currents of wind produced by them are rough and sudden to the vessels

in sailing. You see the peninsulas are planted with villages, houses, and windmills. We have not any that go by water. This part of the scenery forms the S. W. point of the bow of our wonderful arched horizon." Mr. R. now recommended me, for Lady W. remained in the carriage, to notice Burton Wood, receiving its noontide tinges from the sun. We turned a little to the right—"consider," said my companion, "its topmost branches, they embrace the clouds; look down upon its firm and noble base, gradually sloping down with its parent soil, forming itself into deep and renewed crescents, upon a meadow plain of lighter green, like a beautiful scollop on your muslin drapery"—I smiled—"the extremities of its verdant wings embracing each way, the extent of a mile. The interior of this wood is the secret hiding place of—Don't be

alarmed—not of noisome serpents, nor of a murderous banditti, but of an innumerable commonwealth of beautiful pheasants ; and its highest branches are the undisturbed dominion of a nation of crows.” Here I interrupted Mr. Rison by saying, “ it was no small amusement to me, to observe, in the closing in of the evening, the air, and a particular field darkened with a nocturnal assembly of these sable inhabitants, often contrasted with the fair and elegant sea-gulls, which join them in flights, in fearful order, though without intermixing in society.” We now rejoined Lady W—, myself unwillingly quitting a scene so delightful to me. “ Notwithstanding, Sir, the gratification I have received from your information and remarks, my mind is still wishing for something beyond the pleasure of vision. I am now anxious to obtain

some historical accounts of this so little known part of Lincolnshire, in which many important events have taken place which have materially affected the destiny of our venerable country ; for the whole length of this coast, and of the Humber eastward, as well as that of Yorkshire, opposite to us, west of the Trent, must have been always accessible to foreign invaders ; and not only when I passed through Lincoln, but also, since my arrival here, I have seen existing proofs of an ancient Roman possession." " To satisfy those enquiries," answered Mr. Rison, " I would recommend an application to Doctor English, or with your approbation I will speak to him myself on the subject, for he is much better informed of it than I am." Considering myself greatly obliged, I expressed my thanks and wishes for his application to the

learned doctor, to whom I expect an early introduction. This morning, by appointment, I repaired to the church-yard, in which there is a fine walk of a double row of aged elm trees ; the door of the sacred mansion was already open to admit me, I felt a religious awe. Let not *levity* ever pass the threshold to enter the *holy temple of creating Majesty* ! Mr. Rison's lecture visited my recollection impressively. I cherished its remembrance, and found that mine was not the curiosity of a vacant soul, but that it rose already enriched by the study of nature " up to nature's God." Thus disposed I was happy in having deferred my visit. The person of my venerable companion, gave considerable effect to the scene. I reflected on how many departed friends and neighbours his now withered hand had thrown " ashes to ashes,

dust to dust.” “Mr. Rison,” he said, “is the fourth rector I have attended as parish-clerk ; but I was never so borne down by distress of grief as in last February, when I enclosed in the vault under that stone”—we approached it ;—“the remains of our two noble patron’s brothers, George and Henry, Lords N. In witness of this sad text, the sacred edifice wore before me, a gloomy ensign in a mourning drapery of armorial bearings on a ground of black cloth, which was suspended over the pulpit, the desks, the communion-table and the pews of the family.” It is not my intention, Frederick, to give you an account of the storied urns, or monumental inscriptions, that courted my serious notice in the chancel, except that several very handsome ones are raised to perpetuate the memory of those who have long thrown off this mortal

coil, and that two others are now preparing under the artist's hand to preserve from oblivion, those for whom *the eye of sorrow still streams.* Burton Church is a handsome structure, though under the pressure of more than six centuries ; the north side has an aspect of greater antiquity : it may be styled the cathedral of village churches, having an interior so lofty and capacious, that it is capable of containing at least five hundred people. It consists of three aisles, each furnished with a double row of pews, oak coloured. A large modern gallery has been erected at the west end, in which a good toned barrel organ is placed, and managed by Mr. Clerk's son ; the pulpit and desks are placed in a commanding situation. On the east window, in tolerable painting, is a representation of our Saviour in a full length figure, holding a ball in his

right hand, and in his left, a sceptre. The communion-table under it, is handsomely enclosed, and covered with a rich crimson cloth, which, with one for the pulpit and cushions, were the gift of Lady W. in a former visit at this place. I must not pass over without remarking, that in a niche on the south side in the chancel is laid a full length mutilated figure of one of the Norman family, as a knight of Malta; the shield and family crest are yet, though rather indistinctly, visible on his left arm; his legs, the feet are off, sufficiently discover them to have been laid across, an attitude peculiar to that order at the moment of dying. A very ancient sword belonging to this Maltese knight is kept in good preservation at his side; indeed it may be considered altogether as an interesting relic of ancient times. Having thanked my good old friend for

his attention, I returned home, and on seeing Lady N. she, with a smile of good humour, said, "Miss Fielder, you appear to have roused the dormant faculties of all my good neighbours: Mr. Rison has called this morning, and left an old musty manuscript for your great pleasure." Seizing it with avidity, I found it to be a curious record, or parish register on vellum, bearing date in 1665. You will easily judge that these polite attentions to my particular feelings were grateful to me. Adieu.

LETTER VI.

“ Ah ! what delight in scenes like these appear ;
 I seem through consecrated walks to rove,
 To bless these soft retreats,
 And call the muses to their chosen seats.”

WINDSOR FOREST

DEAR FREDERICK,

YESTERDAY morning, being uncommonly fine, while we were at the breakfast table, I expressed a wish to take a solitary walk over the whole length of hills north from Burton. Lady N. kindly met my wishes, and said, “ I recommend you to walk through the plantation, and pass the white gate, of which I

will give you the key, that opens out of the mount on to the hills. I can satisfy your mind that there is no occasion to be alarmed in going alone. I will trouble you to be the bearer of a billet to my neighbour, Lady A. of W. where you have been already introduced. You know only the carriage road ; but as a walk, you will find that between our plantations there is a distance of three miles over the hill path ; you will there find a stile that leads through some beautiful grounds to the house, and I know Lady A. will be happy to see you, and to point out any object she thinks worth your attention." You know already, Frederick, that we inhabit in common with four other villages, the plains on these summits ; but those villages that lay more in the interior are without the rich prospect enjoyed by the Burtonians. I passed through

the little gate, and was immediately on my desired ground. Although these hills have been eternally one, yet they are distinguished by the different names of the villages upon them. That of Burton, which was the beginning of my excursion, has yielded up an extensive and irregular surface of many acres for the use and advantage of industrious man, by whom it has been converted into rich pasturage and arable land, and separated off by a fine luxuriant hedge, leaving a noble terrace on the hill as a common right. The front face of these hills, their aspect full westward, calls the attention for their bold sinkings into deep and expansive vallies, lined with a smooth and lively green verdure that has an appearance of a surface newly mown. The bottom as well as the sloping sides of these fine descents are irregularly studded with dark forest

and flowery heath, and formed into a living picture by a finely marked herd of cattle, some of which have their enameled sides reflected in the water; others are indolently reposing and ruminating or walking, followed by their wanton little calves, frolicking and jumping near their mothers. At the extreme base of these elevations are extended plains of cultivated gardens and orchards, spreading before the gazer's eye their horde of sweets. These are separated from the Stather road by a thick hedge, which is now glowing with the hawthorn blossom. This hedge, with one on the opposite side of the road, encloses it, and beyond that flows the majestic Trent. My path now descends into a bold declivity. Shelving heights enclose me on the right hand, from which issue infant springs, as yet they are pure and untainted, gently trickling

down the rugged sides of their parent sources. Having acquired increase and strength, they collect together, and form an alliance with neighbouring streams; in their union they present a miniature sea. With imposing force in a new descent they obtain a passage through a narrow strait; proceeding on, they form a second sea, till, by repeated reinforcements, they become in a deeper fall unrestrainable, rush impetuously on their destiny, and are for ever lost and forgotten in the overpowering floods of the Trent. Coulby Cliff now engages my attention. A light verdant screen divides it from that of Burton. It receives its name from a pretty village, from which it is separated by a luxuriant wood which towers over its summits. This grand cliff is distinguished from the rest of these mountainous heights by a bold oval projection, on which account the

appellation of Table Mountain would be more appropriate to it. The extent of the surface affords a delightful and safe walk to the careless Rambler. A full foliaged, and, at this moment, flowery hedge, planted in a circular figure corresponding with that of the front of the cliff, separates it from the wood, and appears as a diadem on its brow ; in the centre of which the advanced trees hang gracefully, drooping like a plumed crest, and serve to adorn the monarch of the hills. Coulby Cliff is indeed a grand and magnificent object. I know not whether it is from the *wantonness* of nature, or from the *infirmities* of her age, that its surface presents the boldest and most enchanting irregularities, adorned with the finest forest scenery, or sinking into smooth and regular declivities, or gradually rising to a majestic rotundity. From its base extending a

considerable way, is a beautiful field of moss-like appearance, which regularly receives the Trent at high water. The neighbouring north cliff of Alkborough forms a striking contrast to the foregoing, by the rough and rugged features that distinguish it, and which makes it appear like the grand stay or bulwark of the whole pile. This stupendous hill has the same elevation as the rest, but its everlasting foundations are laid in the waters of the Trent, over which its rugged features hang indignantly terrific at those waves whose tempests have for ages beaten and torn its lacerated bosom, which yawning in hideous figures, discovers caverns of loose gravel, and heaps of ponderous stones. I have now attained a central station—my course due north—and my difficulties increased. For it is here that view succeeds to view, landscape

to landscape, till my ideas are rendered incapable of concentrating themselves. Here must I pause, and for a moment rest. After having but too feebly attempted to describe to you the more striking features of the enchanting spot, I will endeavour to resume my sketch, and so far adorn my picture, as to tell you that the pastoral scenery at this moment around me, may vie with that of the immortally famed Arcadia of the ancient Peloponesus, the favourite seat of Sylvan Pan and his attendant sub-deities. From the elevation of the verdant height, on which I know stand, I command a view of the features of an almost boundless country; the undulation of the hill-scenery descends beneath my eye like the vast waves of a heaving sea; but this verdant swell is richly embossed with the brightly glowing shrubs of wild thyme and

mountain heaths. It is also inhabited by countless flocks of innumerable folds. The fleecy tenants spread themselves in all directions. Here they browse while climbing a precipitous height, on the sides of which others are luxuriantly reposing under a mid-day sun, as if "lulled by the lazy tinkling of a distant fold." I would say that no fleeces are so soft and white, no lambs so innocent and gay as those that now approach and sport before me.

"Where is the shepherd's pipe—the virgin's lyre?"

I now throw my attention over that proud Trent, whose waters appear to roll at my feet. At present it graciously presents itself to me under the advantage of a full spring tide, at which time it measures a breadth of half a mile. A bright cloud in the heavens is reflecting a lucid tract

upon its heaving bosom, on which a flight of fair sea-gulls are skimming and wantoning. It is pressed by numerous vessels: the sloop contrasted with the brig has now spread its whitened canvas to catch the swelling gale; these vessels, from the eccentric and bold windings of the river, surprise the eye at a distance with a white and gilded appearance, as if they were sailing through the meadows. Beyond these waters is an extended and almost boundless plain, ornamented with villages, plantations, cottages, &c.

Nor meanly adds, the scene to fill,
 Lazy turn of neighbouring mill.

These plains, Frederick, rescued from lothsome rputidity, have faithfully rewarded the farmer's toil with the produce of a hundred-fold. I see them waving in lengthened stems of

various grain, and the purified air is exhaling the lovely essence of the bean flower, which is wafted to me upon the wings of the surrounding air. Arrived at the end of my walk, I have attained the north boundary of the Trent, which is crossed by the Ouse and the estuary the Humber in the form of the letter T. The rapid and profound waters of the latter are formed out of the united streams of the two former rivers. In my present situation the Trent presents itself under a new and improved appearance. A triangular isle adorns its centre, and that the course of the vessels may remain uninterrupted, the land on each side recedes in semicircular figures, giving to the island an appearance of being situated in a capacious bed of waters. This little insulated spot of land is in summer adorned with the useful fruits of cultivation ; the points

of the curve form the head-lands of the river; the west, that of the Ouse; the east, that of the Humber. Across the latter I discover the plains of Yorkshire, and the mountains gracefully retiring in the back ground, with various objects on the surface bring them into view. The chalky whiteness of their bosoms relieves the picture, over which a mist at this moment, rarified and coloured by the sun's southern beams, appears like a veil thrown over them.

Thus far excursive 'ere I quit the scene,
 I take a parting gaze,
 To see the purple heath and wild thyme grow,
 To look again upon these blushing hills,
 Where bright in dew, springs forth a wilderness
 of flowers.

Having now passed the boundaries of Sir Charles A.'s domain, I found myself imparadised amidst its shades,

and, on approaching the house, was kindly met, and greeted by its amiable mistress. On reaching the drawing-room, not a little fatigued, refreshment and repose were most welcome to me; but yet exertion was necessary. I had an object in view, which, on imparting to Lady A. she politely said, "as I know you don't wish to remain in a quiescent state, I will accompany you whenever you please. You will find some objects about us not unworthy your trouble." In conversation with her ladyship, I willingly rallied my strength, and, with her, renewed my walk. At the distance of a field we gained the romantic village of Alkborough. Here the winding lanes, with sometimes a deep indent, inclosed by verdant hedges of thick foliage, rendered the scene picturesque. "The tide is yet in our favour," said Lady A. "to show us off to advantage;

and I will take you to the field of a very rich old gentleman bachelor, in which, I am certain, you would think a cottage ornée, would be delightful for a summer residence. Here I found the scenery altogether new, and such as the pencil of an artist could with difficulty depict and colour. We took our stand on the sloping side of one of the most beautiful woodland terraces in nature. On its slanting bosom the oak lordly waving, partly admitted, and in part excluded the sun-beam ; their branches seemed to shun each others' shade, and it was through this light and rural screen, that the lingering streams, slowly rolling, presented themselves to our attention. We remained some time on this inclined eminence, contemplating at our ease, and at high water, the confluence of the rivers. The junction of the Ouse and the Trent, with the

arm of the sea, the Humber forming a grand and capacious bed of rapid waters. Westward, the course of the Ouse was more particularly open to us in an unobstructed direction. We enjoyed a view of its borders, enriched by villages, store-houses, and cultivated lands, altogether forming an appearance of a grand emporium of plenty. Its bosom was conveying to different ports innumerable vessels, deep in the waters. Turning to the left, to take a glance of the inland view, the village steeple of Alkborough with the fan, gilded by a transparent sun-beam, and azure sky, “tapering, pointing to heaven,” and became a beautiful feature in the scenery, particularly as the body of the church is shaded by a row of light trees. We quitted this scene, and returned by a field distinguished by the name of the Countess of Warwick. Lady A.

stopped and pointed out the remains of a Roman encampment, still surrounded by deep mounds that had been thrown up by that restless and ambitious people. A little further on I was struck with the appearance of a stupendous fabric of earth, the east side is still one with the common foundation ; but a broad way has been excavated on three sides exposed to the waters. Viewing it from the base, its magnitude is awfully grand. On the summit has been deeply engraven, a mazy device, called a Julian bower, and it is not a little surprising that this piece of Roman ingenuity has been kept in high preservation during the course and revolutions of many centuries. From its situation on the immediate verge of the country, little doubt can be entertained that the labour bestowed upon this commanding height was intended and made

use of as a strong point of fortification against the attacks of an enemy's fleet. The day was altogether so agreeable, for I passed the remainder of it at Walcot, that I regretted when the sun inclining towards the horizon, bid me depart. Lady A. with her party, accompanied me a considerable distance on my return, till I was met by an escort from the Rectory sent to conduct me to the end of my walk. On my arrival I had much to relate—of that you are a judge.

Yours, &c.

LETTER VIII.

'How selfish sorrows ponders on the past,
 And clings to thoughts now better far removed,
 All thou couldst have of mine, stern Death!
 thou hast ;

Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast."

CHILDE HAROLD.

August.

SHALL I tell you, Frederick, that I feel an irresistible desire to look upon objects that were once dear to my young heart? Rather let me now call them shadows, whose *shades* my present disposition of mind has raised up to disturb me. The plains of Yorkshire are continually before my

eyes, the scene of my happy childhood, at which period my family removed into the south. “ By the waters of Trent I could sit down and weep,” while I look upon thee, my native soil ! But, alas ! I am a stranger in the land of my forefathers, where their very names have ceased to be familiar, and my person is wholly unknown. Should I put my design in execution, the visit must be very transient ; the desire is strong, and has its source in virtue. I will consult Lady N.—The plan is arranged, and to-morrow morning a servant is ordered to attend me ; but a wish to perform my little journey alone will induce me to waive that politeness. The beautiful town of D—c—r is the dear spot I sigh to behold ! the distance only twenty-five miles, which, if I start early I shall make before noon. Good night.—

This morning Aurora, with a lively step, drew aside night's sable curtains and began to dress the chambers of the east with crimson drapery. The god of day, quickly mounting with rapid course, rolled his chariot wheels o'er ethereal space, throwing reproachful glances upon the couches of the drowsy slumberer. Awakened by his salutation as he passed my window, round which the jessamine and woodbine uniting, soften his too ardent rays; I started from my pillow, on which balmy sleep had rested upon his downy pinions. Softly he fled, and left me to reanimated nature—to a recollection of my project. Few preparations being necessary, and every facility given to my departure, I was enabled at an early hour to descend the steep hill under the wall of the church-yard, leading to the Stather, where a ferry-boat, previously

ordered, was in waiting, and quickly conveyed me to the Yorkshire coast. On landing I turned and stood for some moments on the plain over which my imagination had so often wandered. Here I beheld a new aspect of the hills—their verdant bosoms were presented in an interminable length—and their feet skirted by the river, whose waters had now, for the first time, borne me. During my drive the thoughts of soon seeing my native walls, seemed to be a new epoch of my existence; but the emotion was sensibly allied to pain, when the noble tower of the church, afterwards the whole upper part of the edifice, and lastly, the town itself, were disclosed to me. The interval since I last beheld these objects, had seen swept away, by the hand of time and mortality, the whole of a dear and amiable family, yourself being now

the only direct natural bond that unites me to the world. In the endeavor to rally my mind, my ideas of persons and names began to be confused. We entered the town. The postilion drove briskly into the principal street,—stopped suddenly for my orders. Here I was again confused. Do you know the Angel? Yes, Ma'am, it is the best inn. Go there—the noise of the carriage wheels over the stones—the busy faces of some, and the vacant gaze of others looking at me as the carriage passed, did not dissipate my perplexity. When the horses drew up, I ordered the waiter to take care of my little portmanteau, and to prepare a room and dinner. As my wish to pay this visit was conceived in an ardent desire to render homage to the dead, and not compliments to the living, I took a private way to the church,

obtained the keys, and presented myself first at that house which will the least deceive us in outward forms. On finding myself in the temple in which my infant lips were first taught the pious éjaculations of public adoration to the divine presence, my step seemed to be arrested. I gazed around me till a sudden impulse drew me to my father's grave—here I lingered—my spirit seeming to descend into the narrow limits of his chambers, and felt, that

“ E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries ;
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fire.”

My grandfathers and other kindred names received successively my attention. During this interval, my eyes had suffered a change in their appearance. Supposing the common curiosity of a stranger had induced me to view the church, the young

woman who attended, looked upon me with surprise, which was still increased when on walking down the aisles I named the former proprietors of several pews now occupied by different families ; "*and this was ours,*" I exclaimed, on opening the door of one of them. In a moment the visionary forms of my beloved mother and lovely sisters were conjured up in their respective places, myself the youngest, seated by the side of a maternal guide. Gently and with reverence I closed the door, and withdrew under an awful certainty that their purified spirits were now offering a more holy sacrifice than that in which they were once joined by my feeble voice. My inquiring eye found out the names of several companions of my childhood already entombed in the prime of life. This, I said within myself, ought to remind me : that I,

have made some progress in my mortal journey ! I now conversed with my companion respecting the changes that must have taken place—" yes, ma'am, my father often says that all the old families are either dead or removed, and that it is quite a new town." "What is your father?" "The sexton"—" His name?"—"John Fielder"—" Indeed ! is there still a Fielder in D.? When I last visited this mansion, that name was at the head of it ; but fortune is frolicsome, it is now at the feet." I now wished to retire from a scene which had acted powerfully on my mind, gave an acknowledgment to my conductor, and departed. No sooner had I crossed the porch, than my ears were saluted by the chimes that play at twelve o'clock.

Merick, simple as this circumstance, it is impossible to give you the amount of my feelings. Too often had

infant ears listened with delight to this music, not to feel it at the present moment most pungently. My heart having already greatly suffered, was now too much oppressed. Into what a state had I unnecessarily brought myself ! I had not yet entered an habitation—people remarked me—but they were a new generation ; and I stood alone in creation. Happily I reached the inn, where I endeavoured to harmonize my feelings, and wipe away the natural tears I had shed before dinner. Beginning now to think of the living, I inquired, during my repast, respecting two families, but was answered they were then at Harrowgate. More successful in my second application, I forwarded a note to a lady whom I had never seen, and with whom, in the course of an hour, I exchanged the most cordial salutations of friendship. .

This lady, the daughter of one particularly distinguished by my late mother, had passed her youth in the East Indies, and was now enjoying an opulent fortune in her native town. With her I passed the remainder of the day, touching on subjects too interesting to both to admit of our separation without mutual regret. I have just returned from this visit, and am only able to give you the history of the day before I seek repose. The next morning I inquired for the residence of a lady who was on the eve of marriage when we quitted D—. I sent in my name, and was shewn into the drawing-room, where I was immediately joined by a fine young woman of about twenty-two. I expressed my apprehension of a mistake : “no, my dear madam, my mamma, although she is very unwell, is hastening down to you.” A slow step announced her

approach. What a change!—a withered hand—a faded smile, and an affectionate salute received me. All was strange—how crazy are the tenelements our busy spirits animate. I had not any recollection of her person.—More than twenty-five years had passed, in which time she had lost her husband and her health, and had gained a daughter, who was herself married and become a mother; but there appeared to be only one step between her and those tombs I had so lately visited.—Gaiety would have found itself misplaced during our conversation, which entered deeply into the turns of human events. In a few hours I was in possession of all those that had taken place in the long period of my absence. The daughter was perfectly lovely; and the tender apprehensions she felt for her mother's days, had thrown a

sweet anxiety about her. "Eliza," said Mrs. B. "let us no longer dwell on the serious—Miss Fielder's spirits are at present touched too much with it.—Would you not wish to take a walk before tea? You must naturally wish to look over scenes from which you have been too long estranged." "I shall have great pleasure in accompanying you," said Eliza, "for I have often heard the name, and many circumstances of your family mentioned by my father and mother." While we were preparing for our walk, family resemblance was noticed. You have heard, Frederick, that considerable property once belonged to us in D. I now passed through the streets in which it still maintained its ground; but it was ours no longer. The iron talons of the law had wrenched it from us. I pointed out the different buildings as we passed; not with stoic-

like indifference. No ! I felt severely, *for I had felt the world* ; but I had long endeavoured to practise resignation, and to use every means to strengthen my fortitude—to bear out the change. My evening closed with this amiable family, of whom I took my leave—kindly urged by them to return and pass some time among them ; but I began to feel a wish to retire from scenes now better far removed ; this was to take place the next morning, before which I had determined to confer with my name-sake of the tombs. For this purpose, after breakfast, I passed to the church-yard, where I found him with the useful implements of his profession, the spade and the besom. I accosted him.—
 “ Do me the favor to give me some relation of your family.” “ My family, Ma’am ? I am the son of a poor man.”
 “ How came you to be poor ?”

“ My grandfather went to London to recover a property that he was told belonged to him ; there he died, and we were ruined.” “ That was very unfortunate—I don’t recollect you.”—“ That may be, ma’am, but I remember Mrs. Fielder and her family ; you were all young ; the house you lived in is now a boarding-school.” “ So I find.—Well, Mr. Fielder,”—“ My name is John Fielder, if you please.” “ Then if you please, John Fielder, as yours is a profession that teaches the truth, inform me whether you have yet been able to discover any difference between the clay of a rich man and that of a poor one, or are you a leveller of all distinctions ?” He bent over his spade, resting his foot upon it to force it into the ground.—“ As yet, Madam, I have made no discovery, that can authorize me to say there is any difference between the clay of the king

and the beggar." "How mortifying it is, John, that all earthly distinctions cease, the moment the great man passes the confines of the narrow cell you are now preparing." My chaise was in waiting; I paid a tribute to my honest name-sake, and told him it was not improbable we might meet again before we quitted the world. Returning to the inn I settled my account, and acknowledged the particular attentions I had received from my respectable host and his wife.—"I hope," said the former, "You will not be offended, Madam, when I say that you have claims here beyond those of a stranger." "How came you to find that out Mr. D.?" "When I first saw you I was struck with a family likeness, and have since found it was a true one." During our conversation, which insensibly delayed my departure, the bell began to toll the minute

knell, a distinction paid to the higher order. My mind having received a solemn tinge, I enquired the name of the deceased. "It is not unlikely," said Mrs. D— to her husband, "that this lady may know the gentleman." "Pray who is he?" "Doctor T. of R." I started! "He married an heiress, Miss—" I interrupted her—"Fielder." "Yes, Ma'am, the lady was Miss Fielder;" "and my cousin," I rejoined, "although we have never met." I enquired what had occasioned his death, and that so far from home. "Doctor T— has been long in declining health, and went to take the waters of Askirk for his recovery with Miss T. his eldest daughter. He fell in an apoplectic fit, while he was walking alone in the evening, and was found dead the next morning." "Where is the dear girl?" "A gentleman and lady went through yesterday to attend

her, and we expect her every moment.”

“What age is she?” “She appears to be about eighteen.”—“What time do you expect the funeral to pass through?” “In about an hour.” I requested Mr. D— to order my chaise to be put up, and begged his wife would have the goodness to cause Miss T— to be informed that a near relation of her mother’s was in the house. Frederick, on being left alone I burst into tears, and sunk on the sofa.—I came to pay homage to the dead; and in this case a delicate, a kindred orphan was suddenly plunged into a situation that claimed my sympathy. I was strangely affected, an icy coldness seized upon me when I heard the sound of Miss T.’s carriage drive up to the door. She was supported from it into the house by her companions.—In ten minutes Mrs. D— entered to inform me that Miss

T. was in severe affliction, but that she would endeavour to receive me in a few minutes. At the end of that time a gentleman entered, and in silence conducted me to the lovely mourner. She attempted to rise. I hastened forward, caught her hands, which I pressed, while she sobbed upon my bosom : we were alone ; but it was the sabbath of her sorrow, for the sudden loss of an affectionate and beloved father. Grief rendered our conversation imperfect. I understood the state of her mind, and she that mine was in sympathy with it. Her carriage, which on my account had been delayed, was announced to convey her for the first time to the widowed arms of a disconsolate mother ? I tenderly embraced her, bade her to record our meeting in her memory, and to offer my affectionate condolence to her mother. We part-

ed. No sooner did her carriage drive off, than I ordered my chaise, and in half an hour found myself on the outskirts of my native town, which I frequently turned to review, and determined to revisit at a future opportunity. In five hours I was on the borders of the Trent, entered the ferry-boat, attained the summit of the hill, and soon found myself in my own apartment, happy that I had rendered homage to the ashes of the author of my days.

Adieu.

LETTER VIII.

How sinks *her* soul ! What black despair,
 What horror fills *her* heart,
 Far from the track and blest abode of man,
 And every tempest howling o'er her head,

* * * *

* * down *she* sinks

Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
 Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death.

* * On every nerve

The deadly winter seizes—shuts up sense,
 And o'er *her* inmost vitals creeping cold,
 Lays *her* along the snows, a stiffened corse,
 Stretched out and bleaching in the Northern blast.

THOMSON'S WINTER.

August, 1815.

DEAR FREDERICK,

YESTERDAY we attended divine service at the little church of Flixborough, which was erected a very few

years ago by the late patron. Within, it has the appearance of a family chapel, and may contain about two hundred people. Candidly I avow that I never felt a spirit more pure, nor a disposition more sincere in my devotional duties than in this little edifice. Here my mind seemed concentrated, and had not an idea beyond its narrow limits. The band of rural singers, assisted by a good violoncello in the hands of the clerk, who is a tolerable musician, performed their anthems in good style and time, and in voices well harmonized. A neat gallery is erected for their use. The chancel is distinguished by the floor within the railings being covered with a very beautiful carpet of Mosaic needle work, with corresponding cushions, without and within of the same texture, the work of her own hands, as well as the gift of Lady N. .

As my descriptions, imperfect as they are, have afforded you some gratification, I shall proceed with them, and inform you, that last week Lady W. did me the honour to propose a drive through two or three villages east of this. As the day was warm and clear, her ladyship preferred the phaeton, and I found it to be a very improved situation for observations. Wilton, a village much admired, had our first attention; we drove to it through such meadows, that except for the foliage of the thick boundaries that separate them, they might be taken for a finely cultivated park. They were inhabited by a rich multitude of flocks and herds such as made the opulence and pride of the primitive ages. The fair pasturage was no less gratifying to the eye, than the generous dumb creation that enjoyed its luxuries. The village we sought rose to our

view before us on a gentle eminence, and the church appeared to rest in what might be supposed a consecrated valley, shaded by a light verdure. On alighting from the carriage we approached the south verge of the Humber, and walked nearly a quarter of a mile parallel with its waters, then at half flood, which gave it an extraordinary appearance at high water. This river ferries three miles over, but at this time it appeared divided into three distinct parts, from a restless and profound bed of quicksand in the middle that separates to a considerable length the two sides, which alone are navigable; but at the spring tides the sands in the centre, being then covered, throw the inexperienced mariner into great peril; but from observations which have been lately made, opinions are formed, that the difficulty will in

time remove itself, the bed of sand having already lessened considerably. During the time we passed on the shore of this estuary we counted forty merchantmen in full sail; and at the distance of twenty-four miles in an oblique line west of the river, we discovered the town of Hull, and with pleasure admired the shores of the Humber, ornamented with handsome white villas, embosomed in verdant grounds, the retreats of its opulent merchants. On the opposite shore, the dock-yard, and church of the village of Wintringham, caught our attention. The near view, Frederick, of the boisterous sandy Humber, its rising waters, agitated and curling, falling at my feet in whitened foamy waves, coupled with a view of the last mentioned place, brought to my mind a most fatal and affecting little history, founded on a sad acci-

dent which took place in the deadly time of winter.—The relation is, that William Vessey, of Malton, Yorkshire, mariner, sailing on the Humber the 8th of December, 1807, ignorant of its navigation, and unconscious of his perilous situation, anchored near the sands, supposing himself to be in perfect safety, with a very young wife and two infant female children, on board with him, a sudden hurricane arising from the North, drove the vessel from its anchorage upon the sands ; in this situation it became the sport of the tempest, and destruction appeared inevitable. To avoid perishing with the wreck, the devoted family quitted the vessel at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and gained the shore, but at such a season the quick approach of darkness wrapped all things in obscurity, a thick tempest of snow and hail fell, drifting

in their faces while they attempted to gain a neighbouring village. It was now a trackless wild, and "all was black despair." *Hers* was the wrung bosom of the dying mother: exhausted, sinking, *she* dropped "a stiffened corse," the innocent little victims, companions of her fate, perishing in her arms—for they were discovered in that situation. Vessey and his man, with benumbed faculties, were incapable of affording them assistance. They endeavoured but in vain to explore their way to attain it; and were so near perishing that they were with difficulty recovered. The bodies of the unhappy young mother, and her two female infants were interred in the churchyard of Wintringham, by the Rev. L. Grainger, curate. I have obtained a certificate of this unhappy catastrophe. From the situation in which

we stood, the lofty hills of Yorkshire, North, on the opposite side of the Humber, come more prominently into view; and form the back ground of the scenery. On our return we varied the road, and passed through Holton, a village distinguished only by a Roman tumulus or burying-ground. But Coulby offered us scenes more congenial with our taste; it appeared the theatre of rural happiness in its lands, which were stocked and covered with plenty. This pretty village, whose surrounding landscape is a varied charm, possesses a relic of antient greatness in a fine old mansion, once the seat of rank and grandeur, now devoted to a wealthy farmer. Through the whole of this excursion I was particularly attracted by the almost general cultivation of the white poppy, with which every cottage garden is adorned. What an

extraordinary country, my dear is this Madam, with such a scenery around us. We may without doing much violence to fancy, suppose these to be the fields of Minor Asia. Anxious to know the motive for an appearance so remarkable, on inquiring I was not a little surprised to find that this stately flower was raised for the purpose of distillation ; that the villagers had frequent recourse to its Lethean juices, as an inducer to stupefaction, the worst species of intoxication. That the suffering patient, sleepless and agonized with pain, should fly to the use of opiates ; that the Turk, to whom wine is religiously prohibited, should seek temporary gratification in the delirium they produce, does not surprise us ; but that the simple, healthy peasantry of Lincolnshire, who suffer no prohibitions, who live in greater plenty than those of any other

county in the kingdom, should seek this deleterious enjoyment *greatly* surprised me.*

* Opium is the juice of the Papaver Album, or white Poppy, with which the fields of Asia Minor are in many places sown, as ours are with corn. When the heads are near ripening, they wound them with an instrument that has five edges, which, on being struck into the head, makes at once five long cuts in it, and from these wounds the opium flows, and is next day taken off by a person who goes round the field, and is put up in a vessel which he carries fastened to his girdle. At the same time that this opium is collected, the opposite side of the Poppy head is wounded, and the opium collected from it the next day. They distinguish, however, the produce of the first wounds from that of the succeeding ones, for the first juice afforded by the plant is greatly superior to that obtained afterwards. After they have collected the opium, they moisten it with a small quantity of water, or honey, and work it a long time upon a flat, hard, and smooth board, with a thick and strong instrument of the same wood till it becomes of

The circumstance, however, brought to my recollection a very beautiful irregular ode, addressed to that pernicious flower, written by an elegant female, for such she must have been from its style ; and I fear from its strain one also of sorrow. She is now no more. The manuscript, of which I believe a copy has never yet appeared in print, was given to me by a lady, who was acquainted with the author. I enclose you the Ode.

Adieu.

the consistence of pitch, and then work it up with their hands, and form it into cakes or rolls for sale.

AN IRREGULAR ODE TO THE POPPY.

Not for the promise of the labour'd year,
 Not for the good the yellow harvest yields,
 I bend at Ceres' shrine ;
 For dull to humid eyes appear
 The golden glories of the year :
 Alas ! a melancholy worship's mine.
 I hail the goddess for her scarlet flower,
 Thou brilliant weed,
 Thou dost so much exceed
 The richest gifts gay Flora can bestow.
 Heedless I passed thee in life's morning hour,
 Thou comforter of woe,
 Till sorrow taught me to confess thy power.

II.

In early days, when fancy cheats,
 A various wreath I wove
 Of laughing spring's luxuriant sweets,
 To deck ungrateful love.
 The rose or thorn my numbers crown'd,
 As Venus smil'd, or Venus frown'd ;
 But love and joy, and all their train are flown,
 E'en languid hope no more is mine.
 But I will sing of thee alone ;
 Unless, perhaps, the attribute of grief,
 The cypress bud, and willow leaf,
 Their pale funereal foliage blend with thine.

III.

Hail, holy flower ! thou canst cure
 The wretched victim of despair,
 Canst close those wearied eyes in sleep,
 Which never open—but to weep,
 For, oh ! thy potent charm
 Can agonizing grief disarm,
 Expel imperious memory from her seat,
 And bid the throbbing heart forget to beat.

IV.

Soul-soothing plant that can such blessings give,
 By thee the mourner bears to live,
 By thee the hopeless die.
 Oh ! ever friendly to despair,
 Might sorrow's lingering votary dare,
 Without a crime that remedy implore,
 Which bids the spirit from its bondage fly,
 I'd court thy palliative aid no more.
 No more I'd sue that thou should'st spread
 Thy spell around my aching head ;
 But would conjure to impart
 Thy balsam to a wounded heart ;
 And by thy soft Lethean power,
 Inestimable flower,
 Burst these terrestrial bonds,
 . . . And other regions try.

LETTER IX.

But thou, grand object, last and bright,
Exhaustless source of orient light,
Now setting in the western skies,
Where my feeble closing eyes,
Unable to sustain thy fire,
From thy ardent beams retire ;
Seek thee in the milder shade,
And on thy shadows find their aid.

August, 1815.

DEAR FREDERICK,

MY last was a short letter occasioned by the wish I had to forward it by a private opportunity. Since then I have had the pleasure of an introduction to Doctor English, who I find is

a no less learned than a good man.—Not only has he entered with me upon my favourite topic, but has also assured me that he will have great pleasure in communicating such traits of the history of this place, as will illustrate and give a rational effect to local description.—But what do you think was the plan proposed by the ladies? that the Doctor should give his information in the beautiful little verdant box on the mount, which commands a view of that theatre on which I have so often looked with anxious curiosity; *a stage* on which the *ancient Britons* have played sometimes a victorious, at others an uncertain or tragical—but *at all times an heroic part*. The proposal was the happiest imaginable—the day was lovely, and at present yet long enough to enjoy the evening air without danger of damps.—We walked through

the plantation after dinner, and took our stand on the before mentioned spot.—For a few minutes silence held her reign—I ventured to ask the Doctor whether he supposed England afforded many views equal to that before us?—"Our country," he answered, "boasts of some beautiful landscapes--but this is *unique* in its kind." I observed "that Richmond on the Thames, among others, famed through every region, is visited—courted;—that its prospects are enchanting with the additional power which the river affords to its beauty, that it is pre-eminently grand from the decoration of its banks, with the magnificent palaces and villas dedicated to the enjoyment of royalty, of nobility and opulence; in fact, that this populous village adds to the charms of nature, all the advantages of art, and compared to the subject of our present consideration, is a

miniature scene *highly finished and
ornished*. But here we have only
the magnificence of nature, the most
beautiful, as well as the boldest hill
scenery in a direct continuation of
even miles, on a broad and flowery
terrace, its base affording the luxury
of Pomona's sweets, and its bound-
less cultivated plains divided by one
of the finest inland rivers in the king-
dom; A PERFECT TERRA INCOGNITA,
wooded and visited by the winds only,
and beheld by a peasantry indigenous
with the soil. Can you, Sir, favor my
enquiries by a near calculation of the
extent of the bow of that arched ho-
rizon, in the centre of which we seem
to stand?" "That semicircle or bow, as
you are pleased to call it, has an un-
interrupted view as far as the eye can
reach.—If we suppose a good sight
to be capable of taking in a distance of
forty miles, we shall have within that

compass a view of two thousand five hundred and thirteen square miles, within a circuit of two hundred and six miles. Our view now takes in the cathedral of York, the churches of Market Weighton, Howden, Selby, Thorne, the spires of Draxe and Henningborough, several other parish churches, and the alternate relief of *lofty* woodland; all these pleasing variety of objects seem to rear their proud heads to adorn the wide horizon. You know, Sir, that I call it a most wonderful bow, and if it were not for its graceful deviation from a strait line, I would call the Trent the string of that bow." "But (said the Doctor, smiling) according to theatrical representation, I must, by the power of my magic, dismiss the cultivated landscape, deprive you of that wonderful bow, and bring before

my audience the view of an impenetrable forest, consisting of the yew, the oak, the pitch tree—the impregnable fortress of our own Britons—who by this means, and for a considerable time, not only greatly harassed, but occasionally defeated the warlike skill and prowess of the Roman legions. Herodian relates that whenever the Romans pushed on their conquests in the island, the Britons secured themselves in the thick forests that grew in boggy and wet places—from whence at proper opportunities they issued, and fell violently upon the enemy. In the first century Venutius, king of the Brigantes, fled for refuge and security to these swampy forest regions at the time he was attacked by Ostorius and Agricola.—When the Romans travelled from the south into the north,

their common road was by Lincoln* to little Barrow upon Trent,†from thence to Doncaster‡—at which place they kept a standing army of Crispinian horse.” The doctor pointed with his finger, and said, “between the last mentioned towns, lay the borders of the great forest, it is within our view—and used to be the hiding-places of innumerable hordes of our wild ancestors, who watched every opportunity to intercept the Roman provisions, destroy their carriages, and kill their allies and passengers. Exasperated at this bold defiance, as well as at the repeated defeats they suffered, the Romans came to a resolution to destroy these impenetrable fastnesses, and they marched against it with a grand army—encamped on an extensive moor not far from the village of Finningly. The fortifi-

* Lindum. † Sigelocham.

cations that are still remaining there, bear evidence of their proceedings. In that neighbourhood there is a small town called Osterfield, and as the termination *field* seems to have been given only in remembrance of the battles fought near the towns, whose names ended with it, it is not improbable that a battle was fought here, between all the Britons who inhabited this forest, with the Roman troops under Ostorius. In this conflict many of our brave countrymen fell under the Roman stroke—and numbers were driven back to their retreat in the thick forests which at that time overspread all this country before us. But that they might be for ever deprived of their asylum—the conquerors took advantage of a strong S. W. wind, set fire to the pitch trees, of which this vast forest principally consisted, and those trees that escaped

the flames were cut down by Roman soldiers and captive Britons." "Oh!" exclaimed Lady N. "what a vision have you conjured up before us!—never shall I again look on these interesting plains with apathy and vacant indifference. I see a forest of inflammable pitch trees on fire.—I hear the crackling of the flames while they rise to meet the sky, or are driven in volumes of smoke in every direction of the winds. In swarms and with horror our affrighted Britons dart out to save themselves from the fury of a destroying element--but in this distraction the sword of a merciless enemy awaits already raised to strike their heroic bosom, or to bind their indignant bodies in the galling chains of slavery." After this amiable sympathy the Doctor proceeded. "A few single trees still remained, but as those could not resist the winds, they fell


into the rivers, and interrupting their course, the waters overspread the plain, made one great lake, and gave the origin to what are called mosses, or moory bogs, which were formed by the action and re-action of the waters—by the fall of earthy matter from them, and the putrefaction of the decayed boughs and branches of the trees—thus these burned and felled trees were buried under a new formed spongy and watery earth, and were found on draining and digging through the earth again ; an employment which according to Dion Cassius, cost the emperor Severus fifty thousand men in a very few years. Undrained parts yet remain about Hatfield, Thorne, Crowle, Eastcroft, and Amcotts, which lie opposite to us in Yorkshire : the inhabitants call them peat moors, and it is those grounds which yield the peat or dried turf that makes

very excellent fuel. These places are the remains of the antient forests, and are considered the greatest subterranean treasures of wood in this kingdom. May I now, ladies, be permitted to dismiss my forest scene with a touch of my magic wand, and bring back again our beautiful plain, spotted with villages, neat farm-houses, and the industrious mill, with those treasures that supply it with action from the overflowing horn of Ceres, which she is now disposed to pour into our lap. You see the fields begin to invite the sickle. They will burst into animation—the reapers form the well-constructed sheaf in rustic order—the team is oppressed under a towering load of plenty—and the humble gleaners, in their party-coloured garments of industrious poverty, contribute to raise the scene to

a full effect." Here was a general pause.

The Doctor resumed his discourse. "A mind glowing with the love of country, must experience many opposite sensations---on the success or discomfiture of our high-spirited ancestors, during their various struggles for that liberty and protection, which we, under our excellent constitution, enjoy. But must we not feel increased ardor when we beheld, as at present, the very spot which was once the refuge and retreat of the antient Brigantes and Ceritani? The place from whence they used to issue, to harrass and surprize an almost invincible and *the then* best disciplined and most renowned troops in the world, conducted by the military skill and genius of an Ostorius and a Julius

Agricola?" "Henceforth," exclaimed Lady W. "the plains of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, on the banks of the Trent, shall bear immortal witness of the spirit of our untutored ancestors. But has not this island produced a Cassibelanus to meet a Cæsar? a Cunobeline to encounter the myrmidons of a Caligula? a Caractacus those of Claudius? and a Venutius to defend his country on these plains before us against the prowess of the best commanders of Aulus Didius, in an Agricola, an Ostorius?" "Ladies," observed the Doctor, "we have also to boast of a Western Zenobia, a Semiramis, in the person of our heroic but unfortunate Boadicea." "For my own part," I added, "I see no reason why we should seek with so much labour for the renowned in the plains of Marathon, when the ten thousand Athenians and Platæans,

under the command of Miltiades, on the banks of the *Æsopus*, defeated the Generals Dares and Artaphernes, and their Persian Legions, under the empire of the first Darius ! But it is the nature of the English always to lose sight of home, and to wander through every region merely to bestow their attention, and to be enamoured with inferior objects." The Doctor rejoined, " among other arts, we must trace that of war, which the Greeks professed before the Romans, by whom, they, as well as ourselves, were conquered, although neither of these warlike people contended or burned with greater fire for their country, than our own untutored progenitors. While we hang over the charms of perspective, we cannot avoid associating the idea of an actual engagement: indeed, we have only to place  creature Fancy at our side, and

she will bring before our vision various skirmishes between the aboriginal Britons, and their invading foes. From this point of Burton hill, we shall by her help not only see the various evolutions of the charioteers, and the firm phalanxes, but we shall seem to hear the whizzing of missiles—the rattling of shields, of javelins, and of the battle-axes on the plain below ; and while we cannot help regretting that a brave people, tenacious of their native rights and liberty, and severely struggling to maintain that independence, should be finally compelled to submit to a foreign yoke ;—yet we have great cause to rejoice at their subjugation, as that event has been the leading means of bringing the liberal arts and sciences into the island by their conquerors.” The Doctor ceased, bowed to the ladies, and addressing himself to me, said, “ I,

fear, Miss Fielder, I have in a very imperfect manner fulfilled your request.”

“Indeed, Sir, you have by far exceeded it—My mind has received new and important objects”—“You cannot,” he said, “pursue any study that will more correct and ennoble your intellectual faculties, than by tracing the works of nature, and the progress of moral government together. Minds of this cast, if I may be allowed the expression, are in possession of something like a key which admits them to a more secret intimacy with the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Being, who is clearly manifested in his works—a way in which he has deigned to present himself to our consideration. The virtuous student in tracing the conduct of the unerring Ruler of all sublunary events, ought to consider well the advantages with which the present age is blessed above those of ancient times, .

when even the rude beginnings of order were not yet laid—in ours, the design is not only begun, but we can see a superstructure rising towards a state of advancement—above all things, it is essential to watch every occurrence, that affects or contributes to the diffusion of the *great bulwark* of order and moral rectitude—religious knowledge.* For there have been wise men, who declared that laws merely human are not sufficient to render a community wise and happy;† and that it was as easy to build the foundations of castles in the air, as to form human establishments without religion.‡ But the christian philosophy admits that the doctrines of christianity alone, *deeply* engraven on the heart, would be infinitely more powerful than any other government. It is the consti-

* Aristotle. † Plutarch. ‡ Montesquieu.

tution of our nature to complain ; but he who is the friend of God will be at all times ready to “ vindicate his ways to man ;” for instance, may we not conclude that the evils of which mankind complain, may be the remedy for greater evils, or the necessary means for bringing about a higher degree of happiness to them than could have been obtained by any other means ? Extraordinary ones *are at all times in the power of the Almighty*, whenever he thinks proper to display them. Let us review that plain, draw from thence our proofs, and comparing its former state with that in which we now behold it, should we not be struck with horror were our eyes to witness a rude struggle for brutal strength and power without order or discipline ? Our Britons were as wild as their forests ; without mental regulations, unsoftened, untamed by the influence

of a pure religion ; for to that which *they* practised, belonged the savage rites and superstitions of heathen darkness—*human sacrifices*. But, Sir, I observed while we talk and boast of the blessings we enjoy in the present advanced stage of human history, let us not be ungrateful to those who were destined to be called into existence in the reign of mental darkness, and to fight those savage struggles for us ; if I may be allowed the simile, I would say, that our wild ancestors were the labourers that removed the rubbish, before the great, the grand design of civilization, could be entered upon. How vast, how wonderful, is the plan of the divine artist ! And how exercised in discipline before it reach any degree resembling perfection, must be the human heart.” “ You quite mistake me,” answered the doctor ; “ far from reflecting on the untaught primitive

sions of this island, I have only endeavoured to bring them before your consideration in the most interesting position in which we could contemplate them, in order to compare the two periods of time, and to raise our gratitude for the accumulated blessings of our own. I think, Sir, we may suppose that from the first ages of the world men's motives and passions have been pretty much the same : their motives—to obtain a superior degree of happiness—their passions—the desire of victory and power. The events are the same, only they have taken place in different regions, and among different men.”

That sun, which more than seventeen hundred years ago had witnessed the scenes we had been contemplating with so much interest and attention, was now hastening towards a more western sky ; fearful of the damps, Lady W. proposed returning to the house. Remain,

my dear madam, five minutes longer, to behold at this point of declining day the united villages of Garthorpe and Faccaby as they now lay under the setting sun. The clouds, in a gay assembly, form a richly gorgeous train, attending in solemn pomp around his throne. The colouring of a Claude would fail in describing the effect. The god of day is in full retiring majesty—the heavens—the earth, are irradiated ; he sheds on every object a lustre of his beams. The immense expanse of the horizon glows with his brightness. Now the shifting clouds mingle, the ardent crimson is allayed by a suffusion of the purple ; the union is sublime ! They soften into an empurpled rose,—and yet again dissolving, assume tints of the most delicate pink, overspreading the evening with blushes. Undulating rays enlighten the deeper clouds, and

adorn them with an effulgent bordering of the purest gold—they form a rich drapery, and serve as a veil to the too ardent rays of the *celestial* traveller. Like an evening and accepted sacrifice, the smoke rises from the village chimnies with unusual purity; it becomes ethereal, and dissolves in the descending beams. The gladdened waters of the Trent smiling and sympathizing with delighted nature, reflect the heavenly image on their glassy bosom. “*Now half immersed, and now a golden curve,*” the orb descending to the confines of his palace “gave one bright glance, then total *disappeared.*”

“I wonder,” said a young lady present at the tea-table, “what her majesty, Boadicea, would think if she were to see the ladies of the present day?” “Think,” said Mr. Rison, stirring his cup of tea, “she would not only

think, but also say, they are a different race of beings." "Different, indeed," said Lady W—, "but are they, with all their vaunted education, more distinguished for the charm of innocence and virtue? For my own part, I do not see that their wonderful acquirements which her ancient majesty, and the princesses, her daughters, would have thought it impossible for the minds of their fair sisters to attain, have raised them to that *true* dignity which can alone preserve them in the paths of rectitude." "What!" said Doctor English, "does your ladyship mean to insinuate that their knowledge in the complex science of music—the study of the foreign languages—of the arts—their operatical mazes and jumpings taught by the dancing-master—their *demi-attire* in that chaste figure, the waltze, with its appropriate languishing air, do not give them

a preponderating power to sustain the trait most lovely in a feminine character?" "Oh! *how severe,*" I observed, "is the reverend doctor! How is it possible that the mind can be taught the necessary art of retiring within itself, to find out what is passing there, when it is for ever drawn out to the study of exterior objects? And those studies, such only as belong to the senses. Imagination now bears the reins, sedentary application is abjured. Whatever holds the body and mind in quiet disposition, is deemed gloomy and thoughtful; at least, by such as do not know that, in those occasional and daily states, the mind enjoys a luxury unknown to those unoccupied beings, who are ever in pursuit of fugitive gratification." "There is an error—a fault somewhere," said Lady N. "in education, which I should rejoice to dis-

cover. I have already discovered an essential part of the cause; but the remedy would be colossal.”—“Why so?” was the general enquiry. “Because it must begin with the parents, they being the greatest obstacle to the obtaining of the desired end.” For a moment the subject suddenly dropped. “Children,” I resumed, “are to be pitied, they are like the plastic wax, under the design of the artist. May we not suppose that they are brought into existence with their particular constitutions of both body and mind? For I cannot be induced to suppose the latter is an entire blank; but that it has its rudiments although they are invisible to us. The body, with its visible impression of features, is the outward covering; and how much the expression of those features is given by the inward impulse of the mind, is a truth admitted by the most

common observers. We are rational creatures, endowed by the Almighty with a power of reflecting, of reasoning, and of judging on the various incidents and circumstances of life. We have the faculty of conceiving ideas, of meditating on invisible objects and states. *An earthly guest will oft-times presume to send up his thoughts to the heaven of heavens, anticipating that existence to which he knows himself to be ordained, and to which his best hopes lead him.* The mind cannot remain inactive, it increases with its crazy covering, like that it may also become awkward and deformed, either by neglect, or the bias of wrong instruction.” “The Spartans,” said Mr. R. “considered education a serious national concern, and took it under their own regulation. In England, it is an arbitrary caprice, a *perfect mania* in the present day, in

which vanity, ignorance, and mistake are the contrivers. The evil has nearly reached its climax ; and, like all other human things, will have its decline." " Its real purposes," rejoined Lady W. " are certainly defeated if it do not correct the evil tendencies of the disposition, and purify the passions of those gross dregs that disturb and impel the movements of the heart. The inquiry ought to be, how far, as a wife, has the education of a female enabled her to maintain her conjugal faith towards the man who commits to her fidelity, his earthly happiness—his honour—fortune--name and rank ? How far it has endowed her with the ability of exercising towards his offspring in her turn, the performance of maternal cares and duties ? If we look into the *recent* conduct of some of our most *fashionable* women, the answer to those inquiries would

be discouraging.—The season is now approaching when a removal from this part of the country will become the subject of conversation. Probably in my next I shall be able to give you some intelligence respecting it.

Adieu.

LETTER IX.

*“ Soon the fairy scene has vanished !
 Virgins—who too much presuming,
 On your boasted white and red,
 View us late in beauty blooming,
 Numbered now among the dead.
 Lo ! the fickle air that raises,
 Brings us down to parent earth.”*

October, 1815:

DEAR FREDERICK,

THE day of our departure is fixed for the 18th.—Lady W. does not wish to prolong her residence here for fear of encountering bad weather, and worse roads in a season further ad-

vanced. Business of consequence obliges her daughter to remain some time longer, and as I shall have the pleasure of accompanying the former to town, you and I shall, I hope, meet within a short distance of time. During my abode in this retired spot, I have engaged every hour in some agreeable inquiry, but now the scene is changed, and nature herself retires. I visited this morning my favorite walk, and could not help inwardly ejaculating, Where is now the scene, when this lovely retreat was the haunt of the muses, and the delighted hours danced in rosy circles before me? Where is the rich foliage that gave to the arcade under which I so lately sauntered or indulged in repose and meditation, its shape and ornament? Yet still it retains that beautiful and noble figure distinguished by art under the term of Gothic *Oh! nature*

what a model thou art, and hast
 from thy first creation for imitative
 man ! but the season of October is
 advanced, and presents us with the
 affecting scene of her decrepitude ;
 her vigor wasted, and now withering,
 unable to cling longer to their parent
 branch, their colours changing, or
 already changed, to different hues ;
 the leaves fall in gentle showers, and
 are conveyed by the air at my feet, as
 if to excite my sympathy. Even in
 their fall their exhalations are not un-
 grateful.

Those which have still strength
 left to adhere to the exhausted stem,
 mournfully shew us that they also
 must quickly yield to the silent, the
 certain touch of time. The Christian
 moralist and philosopher cannot hurry
 through such a scene, with vacant
 indifference : strikingly sublime, it

cannot fail to reach the heart; it is the language of nature herself, too intelligent to be mistaken; for all must comprehend it—the sickened and drooping leaf presents a lively emblem, that the animal and vegetable natures have in common—their embryo, their growth, and their maturity, decline and fall. A sudden glance to the right, enlivens the gloomy thought, to which I was yielding—the relief comes from the very cause that produced my melancholy. How often do we perceive comfort through scenes of desolation! it is from the decayed, dismantled state of neighbouring hedges, that I discover objects which raise in my breast a lively tribute of gratitude to that Being who has not called into existence creatures of daily—of hourly wants, and left them unfurnished with supplies! I behold the

farmer's fold, oppressed with plenty, standing so thick with an ingathering of corn, that the husbandman may laugh and sing with pious gratitude. The hardy fir, like a tried friend in adversity, now appears with distinguished character, bearing a sombre and rough fruit. The bright olive, sacred to peace, cheers us with its black plum, and the mountain ash, with her brilliant scarlet berry, relieves the gloomy commencement of the reign of winter. The summer has been captivating, and nature has played her part in its lively scenes ; but now, having worn out her gay attire, and exhausted her strength, she retires, into obscurity, like a *fine lady* in the *ruin* of her beauty, but with a higher advantage. Vegetable nature disappears, in order to revivify, and to renovate her beauty and grace, that she may meet the sun in his returning

ardour. Is it thus with the animal beauty? No! she descends and mingles with her parent earth, never to resume her part in sublunary scenes. How humiliating! how alarming! that the creature for whose perfection nature and art have combined to offer to the world as their master-piece, has not been able to find in the whole school of philosophy a contradiction to this mortifying doctrine! *Is it true*, she would ask, *that the bodies of men are made out of the earth?* The answer is of eternal evidence; on which every day of our lives nature gives us a lecture, by shewing us that they are again committed to dust! Does it not then appear, that the human creature is, of all others, the most miserable? Upon *us* the grave closes, and shuts us out from the cheerful haunts of men. The sun will rise no more upon us. Are these indeed truths?

Although they are truths, yet let us not despair, but examine with a little attention the inferior classes of beings, and from them reason, not without hope, upon our own. Are there not many animals who suffer a torpid state, little distinguished from death, and by the influence of the sun, at the proper season, recover the power of life? Are there not some that submerge themselves under water during the winter season? Others, like ourselves, that crawl, like helpless worms, upon the earth, and retire into a covering or sepulchre, there undergoing an invisible transformation, out of which they come with a glorious appearance, with wings and painted plumes, resplendent as more resembling the inhabitants of heaven, than in their former state of an ignoble worm? So striking and pleasant an emblem is this transformation of the

present, the intermediate, and the glorified state of man, that people of the most remote antiquity, when they buried their dead, embalmed and closed them in an artificial covering, figured and painted, to resemble the caterpillar or silkworm. We have yet further hope in vegetable nature. The furrows of a field are a grave out of which the seeds that are buried rise to a new and improved existence, but *that* seed must die and purify ere it quicken. The planetary system gives its evidence in the vicissitude of night and day. The sun sets to rise again—the year dies away in winter; but rises again to verdure and beauty in spring; out of sleep do not we daily awake? Thus does all nature reflect the light of a resurrection.—I must now inform you, that yesterday I took my last drive in this neighbourhood—Lady W. had the kindness to observe

that it would be desirable to make an exterior circuit of the castle and park at N. one of the antient seats of this family—as it is a very short distance from this place we had frequently made it an evening walk. It is an irregular building, and has not been inhabited for any great length of time together, by any of its possessors, being too remote to afford any other enjoyment than the pleasures of the field. In the time of the Duke of —— a pestilential fever in the metropolis and its neighbourhood, induced him to bring his family to this distant possession, at which he remained, till his return to the south would not be attended with any danger from the contagion. At his departure the humble villagers attended their lord, and thanking him for the honor and happiness his residence among them had given, intreated he would again bless them with his presence. To this

honest effusion of attachment, his grace assured them that on a future occasion of a plague, he would certainly return. Far from following the steps of his predecessors, the present owner is repairing and fitting up the mansion and grounds with every possible advantage, intending frequently to reside among his humble dependents. We made the circuit of the park, which is extensive, well stocked with some old noble elms, and fine deer; but there is not any thing to draw particular attention, except the neatness of the village. I now wish to recommend to your consideration, Frederick, the advantages that may be derived from a proper devotion of the mind to such objects as from unavoidable causes we may be placed near. With all the doubts that I had at first upon my spirits, I confess to you that by this agreeable method of engaging my thoughts and actions, I have become

so attached to the local objects about me, that I feel it will be impossible to quit them without regret. Nature has been my subject and guide, and as the hand-maid who records her progress, I have applied to history to illustrate her operations, a branch of study that not only serves to amuse the imagination, and to interest the passions in general, but also to improve the understanding, and assist to strengthen the sentiments. *True*, history has a commanding advantage over every work of *fiction*, which in their nature are incapable of any other use than that which their authors had in view, which must be a limited one indeed. But real history being a display of the conduct of divine providence, in which every thing has infinite relations ; it is an inexhaustible mine of the most valuable knowledge ; it will teach my own sex, Frederick, a different story from that which the

novelist holds out to them ; they will learn that *love* has not been *always* the ruling passion of men's minds and hearts, nor *theirs the only empire to which they have been subject*—there is one text that you may depend upon. The choice of our authors, no less than that of our companions, in a great measure, decides our character, and from that cause, perhaps our destiny ; otherwise, how is it that we acquire a love for virtue, but by constantly viewing her in those points of light in which she appears desirable ? But to understand virtue as a theory, to utter her panegyric on our lips, without admitting her into our hearts, is an hypocrisy, as well as an insult, offered to her dignity : to love her truly, we must become her student, and learn the beautiful elements of which she is formed. The economy of nature is not to be learned from a transient inspection of the heavens,

neither will the earth give her strength, but to such as labour in her cultivation. These are difficulties to those who forget that they have a higher nature than merely creatures of sense, and are endowed by the Almighty with rational and reflecting faculties. Such as these do not consider that the moral regulation of the thoughts is the particular test of our reverence of the Supreme Being. It is not sufficient that we restrain our passions from breaking forth into open disorder, if the imagination be given up to secret corruption; nor, that while we act our part well in public, it may be engaged in irregular indulgences in retirement. It ought to be engraven in indelible characters in our remembrance, that the thoughts are the *prime* mover of the whole of human conduct. The secrecy and silence that reign there, favor that most dangerous doctrine,

entertained by too many, that thought is exempted from all control ; that as long as it remains in our own bosom, no offence can be given—no injury committed—that the enjoyment of it is a right of nature, and the distinguishing privilege of man ; not bearing in recollection, that thoughts bear the character of good or evil, as much as actions—and as the heart is tried and examined by that Being who can search through *it most secret avenues and recesses, so it is alone cognizable at his tribunal.* From this reasoning you will discover how much we are the creatures of early habit, of example, and of education, and *how much depends on the first rudiments of the latter being sketched with truth.*

Adieu.

THE END.

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Monthly Review

